

Lynn Fontanne

Lynn Fontanne was born on December 6, 1887 in Essex, England. She was introduced to acting at the age of 10 while attending a country play in Woodford. It was there that she decided to become an actress. She made her London debut in 1909 after studying with the great Shakespearean actress Ellen Terry. In 1910 she made her New York Debut as Harriet Budgeon in *Mr. Preddy and the Countess*.

In 1922, Lynn Fontanne married Alfred Lunt, another young actor. The Lunts joined the Theater Guild in 1924 and began appearing in many plays together. The Lunts also starred in a film version of *The Guardsmen*, for which both actors would receive Academy Award nominations. Together the Lunts appeared in 27 productions including their last stage performance, *The Visit*, in New York.

The Lunts retired to a 120-acre estate in Wisconsin. In 1964 they received the Peace Prize from President Johnson.

In 1972, the Lunts performed one last time in the television production of *The Magnificent Yankee*. That same year, the Lunts accepted the American National Theater and Academy's first National Artist Award for "their contribution to the American theater and to the nation."

In 1977, Mr. Lunt died of cancer at home in Wisconsin. Mrs. Lunt died in Wisconsin in 1983.

(Adapted from the Kennedy Center Honors home page at <http://kennedy-center.org/honors/years/fontanne.html>)